

Message Text

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ACTION EA-013

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9128

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 7824

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, LA, CB, VS

SUBJ: FIRYUBIN ON CAMBODIA, LAOS AND VIETNAM

REF: STATE 105303

1. SUMMARY: DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN MADE IT CLEAR DURING MY COURTESY CALL MAY 22 THAT SOVIETS BELIEVE THERE CAN BE NO NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA WITH LON NOL. FIRYUBIN DISAGREED WITH OUR ASSESSMENT THAT THERE IS MILITARY STALEMATE AND CLAIMED THAT INSURGENTS ARE GRADUALLY TIGHTENING THE NOOSE. FIRYUBIN WAS RELATIVELY RELAXED ON LAOS AND VIETNAM. END SUMMARY.

2. I PAID COURESY CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NIKOLAI FIRYUBIN ON MAY 22. AFTER TAKING UP SOME ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (FIRYUBIN HAS SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY FOR UPDK AS WELL AS SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA), WE WENT INTO GENERAL DISCUSSION OF INDOCHINA, PROBLEMS. SOUTH ASIA WAS NOT DISCUSSED.

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3. ON CAMBODIA, ICADE THE POINTS CONTAINED REFTTEL, EMPHASIZING

FACT THAT GKR IS LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF CAMBODIA AND NEGOTIATIONS MUST TAKE PLACE WITH LON NOL'S PARTICIPATION. I SET FORTH OUR VIEW THAT MILITARY SITUATION HAD REACHED STALEMATE AND THE OTHER SIDE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THIS FACT AND BEGIN TALKS WITH GKR.

4. FIRYUBIN SAID SOVIETS FAVOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, BUT HE REPEATEDLY TOLD ME "LON NOL IS NOT THE MAN." HE ADVISED ME AS ON DIPLOMAT TO ANOTHER THAT U.S. IS BACKING THE WRONG HORSE. HE ASSERTED THAT LON NOL COMMANDS NO SUPPORT FROM ANY SEGMENT OF CAMBODIAN POPULACE, WHILE FUNK HAD BACKING OF PEASANTS AND OTHER PATRIOTS. HE TOLD ME HE HAD MET LON NOL AND WAS PERSONALLY ACQUAINTED WITH SONN SAN, NORODOM PHURISSARA AND, OF COURSE, SIHANOUK. PRACTICALLY ANY POLITICIAN HE COULD NAME IN CAMBODIA WAS HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE LON NOL.

5. I STATED THAT LON NOL IS HEAD OF GOVERNMENT, DOES ENJOY POLITICAL SUPPORT AND MUST BE INCLUDED IN SETTLEMENT. I SAID GROUNDS EXISTED FOR DOUBTS ABOUT DEGREE OF POPULAR SUPPORT ENJOYED BY OTHER SIDE. AT SAME TIME, FUNK APPEARED TO BE BACKED BY CHINA AND NORTH VIETNAM. FIRYUBIN SAID HE COULD ASSERT CATEGORICALLY THAT DRV IS AIDING REBELS BUT NOT PARTICIPATING IN COMBAT. FUNK IN FACT IS POPULAR-BASED MOVEMENT AND CAN AFFORD TO WAIT. IT IS GRADUALLY TIGHTENING THE MILITARY NOOSE AROUND PHNOM PENH. BEFORE TOO LONG, THE CAPITAL COULD BE SUPPLIED ONLY BY AIR, AND THIS IS CLEARLY AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION OVER THE LONG TERM.

6. FIRYUBIN WENT ON TO OFFER THE OPINION THAT LON NOL WOULD SOON FALL WITHOUT U.S. SUPPORT. I REITERATED OUR SUPPORT BUT POINTED OUT THAT WE WERE NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE FIGHTING. FIRYUBIN REPLIED THAT SITUATION COULD CHANGE RAPIDLY, AND VOICED CONCERN THAT THIS WOULD ULTIMATELY REDOUND TO BENEFIT OF CHINA. HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT CHINA'S GAME WAS, BUT CERTAINLY PEKING HAD A PLAN. HE ALLUDED TO LARGE OVERSEAS CHINESE COMMUNITY IN PHNOM PENH.

7. AFTER SOME FURTHER DIALOGUE ALONG THE SAME LINES, I EXPRESSED REGRET THAT OTHER SIDE HAD IMPOSED PRE-CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. FIRYUBIN AGREED ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT SAID OUTSIDE INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE USELESS AS MATTERS NOW STAND. WHEN I RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHO WOULD BE THE NEGOTIATOR FOR

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THE OTHER SIDE, HE REPLIED WITHOUT HESITATION THAT IT WOULD BE THE FRONT. HE INDICATED THAT KHIEU SAMPHANH WAS A PERSON OF SOME STANDING IN THE FRONT AND REJECTED MY SUGGESTION THAT HE WAS PERHAPS TOO BEHOLDEN TO PEKING. I CONCLUDED THIS PART OF CONVERSATION BY SAYING OUR VIEWS CLEARLY DID NOT COINCIDE AND THAT IT PERHAPS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO WAIT UNTIL SITUATION BECAME RIPER FOR NEGOTIATIONS. I REITERATED THAT LON NOL GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE EFFECTIVE AND WAS PREPARED TO TALK TO ANYONE

IN AUTHORITY PROPOSED BY OTHER SIDE.

8. ON LAOS, FIRYUBIN SAID EVERYTHING SHOULD BE DONE TO NURTURE THE COALITION, WHICH HE AGREED WAS DELICATE. HE HAD SOME CONCERN ABOUT SANANIKONE RIGHTISTS, BUT SAID THEY HAZCAPACITY ONLY TO CREATE TROUBLE, NOT TO TAKE POWER. HE ALSO FELT IT IMPRTANT TO KEEP AN EYE ON CHINESE.

9. ON VIETNAM, FIRYUBIN MADE NO COMPLAINTS AGAINST U.S. AND SAID VIOLATIONS OF PARIS AGREEMENT WERE DOWN. BUT HE BELIEVED GOAL SHOULD BE ZERO VIOLATIONS. HE WRUNG HIS HANDS OVER "MILITANT" SPEECHES BY THIEU AND ADVISED U.S. TO "GRAB HIM BY THE TAIL." I IGNORED THIS AND NOTED THAT COMMUNIST SIDE RESPONSIBLE FOR GREAT NUMBER OF VIOLATIONS.
STOESSEL

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